

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**Agreement for Race to the Top Assessment**  
**Grant Application Reviewers**

**Disclosure of Information**

I understand that the Department is the sole owner, and retains full control, of the records that I receive, review, and generate in my role as a peer reviewer in the Race to the Top Assessment grant review process. I agree not to disseminate any such records or to disclose any information contained in such records to any outside party.

I understand that the Department plans to disclose records and information pertaining to this competition, to the extent such disclosure is permitted by law and will not compromise the integrity of the process or the Department's deliberations.

I understand that any documents or other records that I may receive, review, or generate as a peer reviewer may be records subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. §552). I understand that such records may be exempt from disclosure under FOIA and that the Department exclusively holds the right to determine initially what records, if any, will be disclosed to the public and when, pursuant to FOIA.

I understand that at the conclusion of the competition, the Department will make public the names of peer reviewers for the competition, and also the final technical review forms (TRF) that I complete for each application. I understand that to preserve the integrity of the Department's deliberative process the Department will generally not identify an individual peer reviewer name with particular applications or TRFs.

**Confidentiality and Integrity of the Review Process**

I agree to protect the confidentiality and integrity of the review process in all respects. Specifically, until I receive explicit, written permission from the Department to do otherwise:

- I will not announce, confirm, or disclose my selection to the public as a peer reviewer for the Race to the Top Assessment competition, until the Department officially releases that information.
- I will not contact any party, including the originator of an application, concerning the contents of an application, or engage in any discussions regarding Race to the Top Assessment competition with outside individuals, including individuals who prepared or were involved in the preparation of any Race to the Top Assessment application.
- I will not talk to the press or any other media source about my involvement as a peer reviewer.
- I will not read draft or final applications that consortia may have posted online or otherwise seek information about Race to the Top Assessment applications while serving as a peer reviewer.

- I will protect the confidentiality of the applications and Department documents related to the Race to the Top Assessment competition. I will take precautions to ensure that these documents are not disclosed, and are not lost or misplaced. For instance, I will not read documents out in the open (e.g., on public transportation, or in a coffee shop), I will not scan or duplicate such documents, or load such documents onto a computer.
- I agree not to discuss the information, concepts, and procedures contained in the applications outside of the designated reviewer rooms both during and after the review process. I further agree to discuss them only with the panel members, competition managers and other appropriate Department staff and to discuss them only in the context of and under the procedures for application review.
- I agree to follow the written instructions provided by the Department for completing the TRFs.
- I agree to comply with all instructions from the Department concerning the maintenance, use and disposition of all applications and related documents. At the conclusion of the review process, I agree that I will not retain any originals, copies of documents or parts of documents, and electronic files related to this review, including any notes that were taken on any/all applications that I have received or reviewed.
- I will ensure that no other person has access to the grant applications (this includes ensuring that no other person has access to the software or my password or identification number or can study the computer screen while I enter scores and comments).
- I will not allow others to enter my comments or scores into the electronic system unless I have a disability and need assistive services of other persons.

### **Conflict of Interest**

I certify to the best of my knowledge that I do not have a conflict of interest with respect to any of the applications being considered for this competition.

I understand that I will be considered to have a conflict of interest when I, or certain individuals and entities with whom I have a relationship, have a financial interest in the outcome of this competition.

For example, I will have a direct conflict of interest in this competition if:

- I have agreed to serve as an employee or consultant, or otherwise provide assistance or advice, on any project for which funding is being sought in any Race to the Top Assessment application, or have been offered the opportunity to do so, and have not yet accepted or declined, based on whether a grant is awarded;
- I otherwise have personal financial interests that will be affected by the outcome of the Race to the Top Assessment grant competition; or
- I helped prepare one or more applications in the Race to the Top Assessment grant competition, even if I do not have a financial interest in the outcome of the competition.

I will also have a conflict of interest if certain entities or individuals I have a relationship with have a financial interest in the outcome of the competition. For example, I will have a conflict of interest if any of the following would benefit financially in any way from an application in the competition being funded:

- My spouse, my child, a member of my household, or any relative with whom I have a close relationship;
- Any employer I have served within the last 12 months; my business partner; an organization that I have served as an officer, director or trustee within the last 12 months; or an organization that I serve as an active volunteer;
- Any person or organization with whom I am negotiating or have an arrangement concerning future employment; or
- Any professional associate – including any colleague, scientific mentor, or student – with whom I am currently conducting research or other professional activities or with whom I have conducted such activities within the last twelve months.

The above is a list of examples; it is not exhaustive. Therefore, I will also promptly notify the appropriate program official if I become aware of any other circumstances that might cause someone to question my impartiality in serving as a reviewer for this competition. I further agree to promptly notify the appropriate program official if, while reviewing the applications assigned to me, I discover that I may have a conflict of interest.

In addition, I certify and/or understand that all of the following statements:

- 1) I am not currently an employee of a State Educational Agency (SEA).
- 2) I am not otherwise aware of any circumstances that might cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question my impartiality in serving as a reviewer for this competition.
- 3) Attached to this document are my responses to conflict of interest questions that I provided to the Department in writing or in discussions with Department officials prior to my selection as a peer reviewer. I have reviewed these responses, and to the best of my knowledge, these responses are accurate.
- 4) Based on information I have provided or may provide during the review, the Department may have determined or will determine that I am disqualified from reviewing applications. If applicable, I understand that I may not be permitted to participate as a reviewer.
- 5) I will promptly notify the appropriate program official if I become aware of any other circumstances that might cause someone to question my impartiality in serving as a reviewer for this competition. I further agree to promptly notify the panel monitor or other appropriate program official if, while reviewing the applications assigned to me, I discover that I may have a direct or indirect conflict of interest not previously identified.

### **Agreement on Scope of Work**

- A. Before reviewing and scoring any application, I will carefully read all instructions to reviewers, priorities, regulations, criteria, frequently asked questions, and the technical review form, all of which will be made available to me by the appropriate program official;
- B. I will carefully review and score all applications provided to me;
- C. I will score each application solely on its content and the degree to which the application meets the appropriate priorities and criteria;

- D. I understand that applications are made available to peer reviewers solely for the purpose of reviewing those applications against the selection criteria of the grant program;
- E. I will complete a technical review form for each application, which includes recording the scores, writing comments to justify the scores, and submitting the scores electronically, as instructed by Department officials; and
- F. I understand the importance of providing thoughtful and constructive comments justifying my scoring of applications.

By signing below, I acknowledge and agree to the terms outlined in this agreement. I understand and recognize that the Department reserves the right to remove me from serving as a peer reviewer in the event that I violate a term of this agreement or am disqualified from service due to a conflict.

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Printed or Typed Name of Reviewer

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Signature of Reviewer

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Date